

What is claimed is:

1. An optical disc authentication method, each disc having a plurality of ways and a plurality of sectors in each way, the method comprising the steps of:
 - (i) measuring the quantity of sectors in each of a defined quantity of ways to provide a disc fingerprint comprising way sector quantity values for an original disc and a target disc; and
 - (ii) authenticating the target disc by:
 - a) comparing the target disc fingerprint to the original disc fingerprint to determine a percentage of coinciding way sector quantity values; and
 - b) classifying the target disc according to whether its determined percentage value is above or below a pre-defined percentage threshold value, wherein a target disc having a determined percentage value of greater than or equal to the threshold value is classified as an original disc, and a target disc having a determined percentage value of less than the threshold value is classified as an illegally copied disc.
2. The method according to claim 1, the measuring step includes the steps of:
 - (i) determining optical disc drive characteristics;
 - (ii) collecting sector reading time data; and
 - (iii) processing the collected data to provide way sector quantity values.
3. The method according to claim 2, wherein the optical disc drive characteristics are determined by:
 - (i) determining cache buffer memory size of the disc drive; and
 - (ii) determining reading speed reduction parameters of the disc drive.
4. The method according to claim 2, wherein the sector reading time data is collected by:
 - (i) filling the cache buffer with blank data; and
 - (ii) collecting reading time data in a reading time array from a defined quantity and location of ways on a disc.

5. The method according to claim 2, wherein the collected data is processed by:
 - (i) filtering the data to compensate for reading errors;
 - (ii) determining a common slope from the filtered data; and
 - (iii) identifying slopes matching the determined common slope to ascertain individual ways for the measurement of way sector quantity values.
10. 6. The method according to claim 1, wherein the original disc fingerprint is provided in the form of a CD-Key.
15. 7. The method according to claim 4, wherein the defined location of ways is the outside edge of the trace to increase accuracy.
20. 8. The method according to claim 7, wherein a file is added to product data, and the file of sufficient size to ensure disc fingerprinting is performed at the outside edge of the disc to increase accuracy.
25. 9. The method according to claim 8, wherein the file is empty.
30. 10. The method according to claim 1, wherein the pre-defined percentage threshold value is about 70.
11. The method according to claim 1, wherein the defined quantity of ways tested is at least about 50.
35. 12. The method according to claim 1, wherein product data is encrypted.
13. The method according to claim 1, wherein a protective shell is added to product data that requests a correct CD-Key to unlock the shell for access to the product data.
14. The method according to claim 1, wherein one or more steps are performed remotely.
15. The method according to claim 1, wherein a recordable disc is used.
16. The method according to claim 15, wherein the recordable disc is blank to limit the process to disc fingerprinting, enabling adding of product data at

a later time.

17. An optical disc authentication apparatus, each disc having a plurality of ways and a plurality of sectors in each way, the apparatus comprising:

5 means for measuring the quantity of sectors in each of a defined quantity of ways to provide a disc fingerprint comprising way sector quantity values for an original disc and a target disc; and

means for authenticating the target disc including:

10 means for comparing the target disc fingerprint to the original disc fingerprint to determine a percentage of coinciding way sector quantity values; and

15 means for classifying the target disc according to whether its determined percentage value is above or below a pre-defined percentage threshold value, wherein a target disc having a determined percentage value of greater than or equal to the threshold value is classified as an original disc, and a target disc having a determined percentage value of less than the threshold value is classified as an illegally copied disc.

20 18. The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the measuring means includes:

 means for determining optical disc drive characteristics;

 means for collecting sector reading time data; and

25 means for processing the collected data to provide way sector quantity values.

19. The apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the optical disc drive characteristics are determined by:

30 means for determining cache buffer memory size of the disc drive; and

 means for determining reading speed reduction parameters of the disc drive.

20. The apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the sector reading time data is collected by:

35 means for filling the cache buffer with blank data; and

 means for collecting reading time data in a reading time array from a defined quantity and location of ways on a disc.

21. The apparatus according to claim 18, wherein the collected data is

processed by:

means for filtering the data to compensate for reading errors;
means for determining a common slope from the filtered data; and
means for identifying slopes matching the determined common slope
5 to ascertain individual ways for the measurement of way sector
quantity values.

22. The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the original disc fingerprint
is provided in the form of a CD-Key.
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23. The apparatus according to claim 20, wherein the defined location of ways
is the outside edge of the trace to increase accuracy.

24. The apparatus according to claim 23, wherein a file is added to product
15 data, and the file of sufficient size to ensure disc fingerprinting is
performed at the outside edge of the disc to increase accuracy.

25. The apparatus according to claim 24, wherein the file is empty.
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26. The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the pre-defined percentage
threshold value is about 70.

27. The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the determined quantity of
ways tested is at least about 50.
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28. The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein product data is encrypted.

29. The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein a protective shell is added
30 to product data that requests a correct CD-Key to unlock the shell for
access to the product data.

30. The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein one or more elements are
performed remotely.
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31. The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein a recordable disc is used.

32. The apparatus according to claim 31, wherein the recordable disc is blank
to limit the process to disc fingerprinting, enabling adding of product data
at a later time.

33. A storage medium readable by a computer encoding a computer process to provide an optical disc authentication method, each disc having a plurality of ways and a plurality of sectors in each way, the computer process comprising:

- 5 a processing portion for measuring the quantity of sectors in each of a defined quantity of ways to provide a disc fingerprint comprising way sector quantity values for an original disc and a target disc; and
- a processing portion for authenticating the target disc including:
- 10 a processing portion for comparing the target disc fingerprint to the original disc fingerprint to determine a percentage of coinciding way sector quantity values; and
- a processing portion for classifying the target disc according to whether its determined percentage value is above or below a pre-defined percentage threshold value, wherein a target disc having a determined percentage value of greater than or equal to the threshold value is classified as an original disc, and a target disc having a determined percentage value of less than the threshold value is classified as an illegally copied disc.
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34. The method according to claim 33, wherein the measuring processing portion includes:

- a processing portion for determining optical disc drive characteristics;
- a processing portion for collecting sector reading time data; and
- 25 a processing portion for processing the collected data to provide way sector quantity values.

35. The method according to claim 34, wherein the optical disc drive characteristics are determined by:

- 30 a processing portion for determining cache buffer memory size of the disc drive; and
- a processing portion for determining reading speed reduction parameters of the disc drive.

35 36. The method according to claim 34, wherein the sector reading time data is collected by:

- a processing portion for filling the cache buffer with blank data; and
- a processing portion for collecting reading time data in a reading time array from a defined quantity and location of ways on a disc.

37. The method according to claim 34, wherein the collected data is processed by:

- 5 a processing portion for filtering the data to compensate for reading errors;
- a processing portion for determining a common slope from the filtered data; and
- 10 a processing portion for identifying slopes matching the determined common slope to ascertain individual ways for the measurement of way sector quantity values.

38. The method according to claim 33, wherein the original disc fingerprint is provided in the form of a CD-Key.

15 39. The method according to claim 36, wherein the defined location of ways is the outside edge of the trace to increase accuracy.

40. The method according to claim 39, wherein a file is added to product data, and the file of sufficient size to ensure disc fingerprinting is performed at the outside edge of the disc to increase accuracy.

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41. The method according to claim 40, wherein the file is empty.

42. The method according to claim 33, wherein the pre-defined percentage threshold value is about 70.

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43. The method according to claim 33, wherein the determined quantity of ways tested is at least about 50.

30 44. The method according to claim 33, wherein product data is encrypted.

45. The method according to claim 33, wherein a protective shell is added to product data that requests a correct CD-Key to unlock the shell for access to the product data.

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46. The method according to claim 33, wherein one or more steps are performed remotely.

47. The method according to claim 33, wherein a recordable disc is used.

48. The method according to claim 47, wherein the recordable disc is blank to limit the process to disc fingerprinting, enabling adding of product data at a later time.